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Research Report

Newspaper Advertising Bureau, inc. 485 Lexington Avenue, New York, New York 10017

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

OF FREQUENT MOVIE-GOERS

This study is one of a series of marketing research reports prepared by the Newspaper Advertising Bureau, Inc., as a service to the newspaper business and its advertisers. These reports form the basis of recommendations for the efficient use of the newspaper medium to meet the specific marketing needs of individual companies.

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INTRODUCTION

Although the movie industry deals, most often, with problems of how many and who attend a specific movie--and when--it is sometimes useful to look at the characteristics of movie-goers from the larger viewpoint of the nation as a whole.

It happens that the Simmons Market Research Bureau (SMRB) has data on movie-going, collected from its nationally projectable random sample of 19,000 respondents. This study is based on a sample of adults--those 18 years old or older--but SMRB has also done a study of adolescents and in that study were included questions about movie-going. By looking at both of these two sources, it is possible to come up with a composite view of movie-goers for the country as a whole. In turn, that means it is possible to determine the age, income, education, etc., of typical movie-goers.

Since both studies also include questions on media, it is also possible to determine the media habits of movie-goers, again on a national basis.

These studies, while large and well controlled, are not perfect matches for each other. There are some variables measured in one study that were not used in the other. For a few variables, the categories used to characterize people were not the same in both studies.

Since the SMRB national study is widely available, additional analyses can be done by anyone who wishes to make the arrangements. Of

course, these data are not a custom study of movies and therefore the number of variables (and thus relationships) to be examined is limited. Even so, much can be learned.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Almost half (45%) of the admissions to movies are accounted for by those who are 12 to 17 years old. About a third of the admissions (36%) are accounted for by those over 24 years of age. (A fifth of the admissions represent those over 35.) The remaining 19% are accounted for by those who are between 18 and 24. Most teenagers go to the movies at least once a month; most of those over 24 do not.

Given the facts, it would be fair to say that being a teenager means one goes to the movies. There is little difference between young people who live in big cities and those who live in rural areas; those who live in one region or another and those who live in counties with many people or counties with only a few people. There is a difference between younger teenagers and older teenagers--those under 14 don't go as often as the older ones. Perhaps this has to do with parental approval; having enough money and having the transportation to go to the movies. That young people go, regardless of where they live (and, by implication, regardless of the breadth of choices available to them or how far they might have to go) suggests that movie-going is part of being a teenager. Regardless of what is playing or how far the theatre is, come Friday night, they go. Some go very often.

But older people have more choices; they have a wider range of activities; and, to some extent, different values. Going to the

movies is not a required part of being an adult. Those in big cities are more likely to go; those who live in the West may be somewhat more likely to go to the movies. It is certainly true that those living in big cities have a wider menu of movies to choose from than do those in rural areas. Usually it is easier to get to a theatre in a big city than it is in a rural area.

Although newspaper reading by teenagers is generally lower than newspaper reading by adults, those teenagers who are frequent movie-goers read daily newspapers at levels comparable to adult movie-goers.

Frequent movie-going teenagers are more likely to view late fringe television than are frequent movie-going adults.

There is a suggestion in the data that adults with more money are more likely to go to the movies than are adults with less money.

Those adults who are the most frequent newspaper readers are also the most likely to be movie-goers while those who watch the most television are the least likely to be movie-goers.

Table I

Clearly the frequent movie-goers are the young people. Only a small proportion of those over twenty-five years of age are frequent movie-goers. The 15 to 17 year olds are more likely to go twice or more often a month than are those who are 12 to 14. Perhaps this is because the younger people have less money and it is harder for them to get transportation--they must depend on others to drive them or to use public transportation. Many fewer of those 18 to 24 go to the movies frequently. And every further increase in age is accompanied by a drop in the proportion who are frequent movie-goers.

Movie-going by Age

Percentage going to movies twice or more in the last month

Age	Percent	Index #
12-14	40%	354
15-17	55%	488
18-24	13%	117
25-34	7%	62
35-44	6%	55
45-54	4%	35
55-64	3%	28
65 +	2%	19
Total U.S. (12 +)	11%	100

* An index of 100 is average. An example of how this table is to be read is: 40% of those who are 12 to 14 years old said they had gone to the movies twice or more often "last month."

Table II

Just as the teenagers are much more likely to be frequent movie-goers, so they make up the bulk of movie admissions--45% of all admissions are accounted for by people who are between 12 and 17. About a fifth of the admissions are made up of the 18 to 24 year olds. But the remaining third of the admissions come from those over twenty five--an eighth from those over 45. Part of the reason the older groups account for so much more of the admissions than would be expected, given the proportion who are frequent movie-goers, may be due to the fact that there are more people in the age group 30 to 44 than in either younger or older groups. To lose any significant part of the total group would be unacceptable to any theatre owner or major movie-maker.

Movie Admissions, by Age

Age	Percent of Total Admissions	
12-14	18%	45%
15-17	27%	
18-24	19%	33%
25-34	14%	
35-44	9%	36% / 22%
45-54	6%	
55-64	4%	
65 +	3%	
	100%	

An example of how this table is to be read is: 18% of all admissions are accounted for by those aged 12 to 14.

Table III

The movie industry has the teenagers. Going to movies seems to be a part of the culture. If you are a teenager, then you go to movies and you are likely to go often. It doesn't seem to make any difference how far you have to go or the variety of titles available. Those who live in rural areas are just as likely to be frequent movie-goers as those in cities where the selection is usually much wider. And rural areas probably mean driving longer distances to get to the movies. Yet they go.

Frequent Movie-going by City-Suburb-Rural Among Teens

Residence	Percentage of teens (12-19) going twice or more in last month	Index*
City	53%	104
Suburb	55%	106
Rural	45%	87
Total U.S.	51%	100

* An index of 100 is average for this group. An example of how this table is to be read is: of all teens living in cities, 53% went to the movies at least twice in the last month.

Table IV

Nor does it make much difference whether teens live in very populated areas or in relatively sparse areas. The variations in the proportions who are frequent movie-goers are relatively minor.

Frequent Movie-going by Population of Residence County Among Teens

Residence County*	Percentage of teens (12-19) going twice or more in last month	Index**
Most populated counties	54%	106
2nd " "	52%	102
3rd " "	45%	88
Least " "	49%	95
Total U.S.	51%	100

* Counties are divided into four groups, approximately equally.

** An index of 100 is average for this group. An example of how this table is to be read is: of all teens living in the most populated counties, 54% went to the movies at least twice in the last month.

Table V

Nor does region make much difference.

Frequent Movie-going by Region Among Teens

Region	Percentage of teens (12-19) going twice or more in last month	Index*
Northeast	51%	99
North Central	48%	93
South	52%	102
West	55%	108
Total U.S.	51%	100

* An index of 100 is average for this group. An example of how this table is to be read is: of all the teens (12-19) living in the Northeast, 51% went to the movies at least twice in the last month.

Table VI

Among adults the picture changes. Adults who live in cities are far more likely to go to the movies frequently than are those who live in rural areas. There may be several reasons for this. Those living in rural areas typically have less money and may have less discretionary income. Theatres are farther apart and there is less variety available than is true in the cities. But the fact that there are reasonably large differences here suggests that something does make a difference. Adults have other things to do with their time and going to the movies is not an iron-clad rule which defines being an adult. When it is easier and when they have more to chose from, they go more often; if not, they don't. There is much less newspaper movie advertising in rural areas.

Frequent Movie-going by City-Suburb-Rural Among Adults

Residence	Percentage of adults going twice or more in last month	Index*
City	9%	142
Suburb	6%	98
Rural	3%	52

* An index of 100 is average for this group. An example of how to read this table is: among adults living in cities, 9% went to the movies at least twice in the last month.

Table VII

And this is also reflected in the differences among those who live in populated counties and those who live in sparsely-settled counties. When it is easier, or when people have more money or when there is more variety, they are more likely to go.

Frequent Movie-going by Population of Residence County Among Adults

Residence County*	Percentage of Adults going twice or more in the last month	Index**
Most populated counties	8%	125
2nd " " "	7%	112
3rd " " "	4%	61
Least " "	2%	40
Total U.S.	6%	100

* Counties are divided into four groups, approximately equally.

** An index of 100 is average for this group. An example of how this table is to be read is: Of all adults in the most populated counties, 8% went to the movies at least twice in the last month.

Table VIII

There are few differences by Region. It is sensible that more of those in the West are frequent movie-goers--at least around Los Angeles, where autos are a way of life and making movies a part of the culture.

Frequent Movie-going by Region Among Adults

Region	Percentage of Adults going twice or more in the last month	Index*
Northeast	6%	105
North Central	5%	80
South	6%	99
West	8%	124
Total U.S.	6%	100

* An index of 100 is average for this group. An example of how this table is to be read is: Among adults living in the Northeast, 6% went to the movies at least twice in the last month.

Table IX

There may be a relationship between income and frequency of attending movies. The differences in indices are large but the differences among the percentages are not large. If there is a real difference (not just the result of sampling variations) the more income, the more likely adults are to go to the movies often.

Frequent Movie-going by Family Income Among Adults

Annual Household Income	Percentage of Adults going twice or more in last month	Index*
$50,000 +	7%	119
$35,000 - 49,999	8%	124
$25,000 - 34,999	7%	114
$15,000 - 24,999	5%	86
Under $15,000	6%	90
Total U.S.	6%	100

* An index of 100 is average for this group. An example of how to read this table is: Among adults with annual household incomes of $50,000 or more, 7% went to the movies at least twice in the last month.

Table X

Teenagers who go to the movies twice a month or more often are more likely than other teens to read the daily paper. Their level of exposure--about two out of three read a daily paper on the average weekday--is about the same as most adults. Adults who are frequent movie-goers (twice or more per month) are no different from the rest of the population, in their newspaper reading behavior--two out of three read on the average weekday. Frequent movie-going adults are more likely than other adults to read a Sunday paper (index of 119 or 19% more likely). Frequent movie-going teens may be marginally better readers of the Sunday paper than are other teens.

The frequent movie-going teens are better viewers of late fringe than are all other teens--perhaps they are older, on the average, and thus more likely to stay up. The absolute level of viewing is about one out of four or five views the average half-hour (or at least tunes in for a while). But they are less likely to view prime-time shows than other teens. Frequent movie-going adults are quite like the other adults in their viewing behavior--at least during prime-time and late prime-time.

Media Exposure Among Frequent* Movie-Goers
Teens vs. Adults

	Percent of Teens (12-19)	Index**	Percent of Adults	Index**
Read One or More Daily Newspapers Yesterday	67%	107	67%	100
Read One or More Sunday Newspapers	58%	104	80%	119
Watched Television (Average Half-Hour) Late Fringe (Weekday) (11 PM-1 AM)	22%	117	17%***	105
Prime-Time (Mon. to Sat.) (8 PM-11 PM) (Sunday) (7 PM-11 PM)	42%	84	36%	98

* Two or more times a month.
** An index of 100 is average.
*** For adults, the question encompasses the period from 11:30 PM to 1:00 AM.
An example of how this table is to be read is: Of all teens who went to the movies at least twice in the last month, 67% read a daily newspaper yesterday.

Table XI

Newspaper section/pages readership was not measured in the SMRB teen report.

With the exception of general news, other pages/section readership is only slightly less among frequent movie-goers than among all newspaper readers. There is also a tendency for frequent movie-goers to be more selective in their page/section readership vs. generally reading all pages/sections.

This may be due to the fact that frequent movie-goers tend to be younger. Younger people tend to have this pattern of reading.

Frequent Movie-goers
Newspaper Section/Pages Readership
Among Adults

Pages/Sections	Percentage of Frequent Movie-goers Who Generally Read	Index*
General News	93%	101
Entertainment	79%	98
TV/Radio Listings	74%	98
Sports	78%	99
Comics	76%	97
Business/Finance	72%	94

* An index of 100 is average for this group. An example of how this table is to be read is: 93% of frequent movie-going adults generally read general news pages.

Table XII

Quintile analysis and media imperatives were not measured in the SMRB teen report.

Among frequent movie-goers, 48.5% are considered to be heavy newspaper readers (Quintiles 1 & 2) vs. 39.2% considered heavy television viewers.

18.8% are reached reasonably by both newspapers and television

28.0% are reached best by television

36.4% are reached best by newspapers

Both newspaper and television "exposure" can be represented by a quintile analysis. In each case, the entire sample is divided into five approximately equal groups which vary from much exposure to the medium to little exposure.

About a fifth of the population (19%) of frequent movie-goers both read a lot of newspaper and watch a lot of TV.

More than a quarter (28%) watch a lot of TV but don't read a lot of newspapers. These are the TV imperatives. The advertiser can reach them through TV but not so well through newspapers.

More than a third (36%) read a lot of newspapers but don't watch much TV. These are the newspaper imperatives. The advertiser can reach them through newspapers but not so well through TV.

Frequent Movie-goers
TV & Newspaper Exposure
(Quintiles) Among Adults**

Newspapers	Percentage	Index
Quintile 1	21.5%	120
Quintile 2	27.1%	91
Quintile 3	13.7%	91
Quintile 4	17.7%	109
Quintile 5	20.7%	95
	100%	
Television (Prime time)		
Quintile 1	20.2%	102
Quintile 2	19.0%	95
Quintile 3	17.2%	87
Quintile 4	23.3%	114
Quintile 5	20.2%	101
	100%	
Media Imperatives		
Newspaper Imperative	36.4%	105
Television Imperative	28.0%	100
Newspaper-Television Dual	18.8%	86
Neither	16.8%	
** NA in Teen Report	100%	

* An index of 100 is average for this group. An example of how this table is read is: Of all adults, 21.5% are in Quintile #1 (most heavily exposed to newspapers).